

MEMORANDUM FOR: George A. Carver, Jr., D/DCI/NIO

SUBJECT : Comments on Attached Letter
(Dated 12 January 1976)

1. In general, most of the points in the attached letter are accurate, but they tend to gloss over some of the important nuances in the situation.

- the spring, 1970 memorandum was on "prospects", not "political prospects" -- a minor point.
- as memory serves (and I do not have a copy of the memorandum), the point made in the memorandum on military intervention into Cambodia was not that it would not significantly affect the ability of the communists to expand their control in Cambodia. Instead, the point was that for such a military action to have great impact would probably require a large force to be committed and to be sustained for a considerable length of time.
- the memorandum never said that a US military incursion would fail.
- by the time the memorandum hit the DCI's desk, it was practically the eve of the US military action; the publication of the memorandum would have inevitably appeared to have been "writing for the record" -- the decision had already been made.

2. The remarks in the letter concerning the draft estimate on the results of the US incursion into Cambodia are correct. Even so, it should be pointed out that between the time of the draft and the decision not to proceed with it several factors were pertinent.

- the conditions surrounding the incursion changed, i.e., the operation was terminated at the end of June.
- with the operation terminated, it did not make much sense to rush into print with what had to be incomplete data -- information on the results and -- more important -- on their impact were still coming in. Moreover, the key question then became that of "impact", and it was too early to offer anything but very tentative judgments on this score.

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